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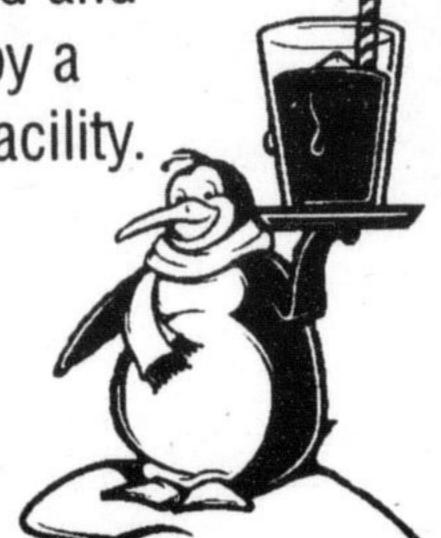
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Teachers will back strike

By DENNIS SMITH

Special to The Champion

A proposed 15 per cent workload increase and no recent pay hikes has meant a resounding strike vote for Halton's public secondary school teachers.

Thursday teachers backed a strike, if it comes to that, by a majority of more than 90 per cent.

The vote will enable secondary teachers to strike next fall if conciliation does not resolve the dispute before then.

Halton's public secondary teachers are unhappy with a proposal they teach seven classes per school year instead of six.

"The provincial funding formula calls for a fairly drastic increase in workload," said Al Tanner, who's area president of the Ontario Secondary Schools Teachers' Federation.

"At the same time, preparation time is being removed. The net effect is teachers won't be able to provide services in and out of the classroom."

Mr. Tanner said increased workload will make it difficult for teachers to provide after-school help or support extra-curricular activities like sports, drama and special interest clubs.

He said a provincial estimate of 25 minutes' more teaching time per day is misleading.

Nearly all Halton secondary schools are on semester systems, so teachers would have to teach three courses during one semester and four during the other.

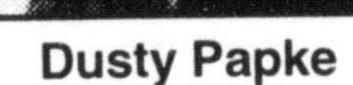
"That would be 80 extra minutes per day of half the year, but an equal amount of time would be required for preparation and marking," said Mr. Tanner.

He added the Halton District School Board's proposals go well beyond the 1,250 minutes per week called for by the provincial education Bill 160.

The union leader said there are also concerns about secondary teachers' benefits, sick leave and possibly another wage freeze. He noted the teachers have not had salary increases in seven years.

"The board is under pressure by the government again to reduce spending," said Mr. Tanner. "And their way of implementing this is by passing on the demands to employees."





Mr. Tanner said the OSSTF local will continue to negotiate. A conciliator is being appointed to meet with both sides and try and resolve the dispute.

Dusty Papke, director of the Halton District School Board, said the 1,250 minutes per week is meant as a minimum average teaching time. "It's a floor, not a ceiling."

A teacher handling four courses of 75 minutes would be teaching 1,500 minutes during an average week.

In addition, the "downloading" exchange of responsibilities means the province is assuming half of education costs from property tax bills and freezing education costs for the next three years.

"The ability of school boards to raise revenues is not as flexible under the new funding formula model," noted Dr. Papke. "This is like negotiating a first collective agreement."

He declined to comment further on specific issues, noting these are part of contract negotiation.

Current negotiations with the Halton District School Board involve an estimated 970 secondary teachers.

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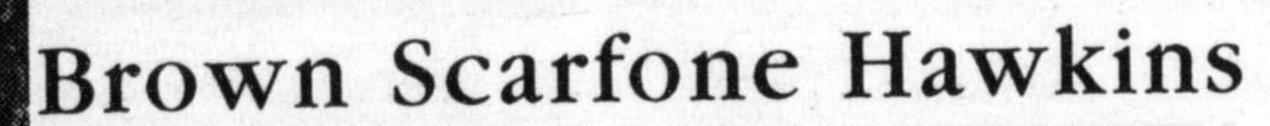
DATE: July 9th, 1998 TIME: 4:00 to 6:00 pm

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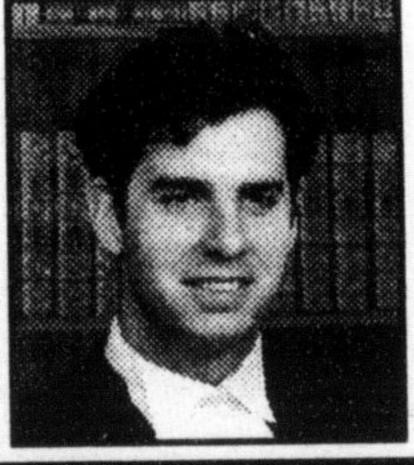
- Business Visitor Visas
- Nonimmigrant Work Visas
- Managers & Executives
- Investor Visas
- Immigration Strategies under NAFTA
- The Illegal Reform and Immigration Responsibility Act of 1996
- How to Avoid Summary Exclusion from the U.S.
- How to Avoid Exclusion on the Basis of a Criminal Conviction
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